

Troy Coons
Northwest Landowners Association
Energy and Natural Resources Committee
Testimony for SB 2208
January 28, 2021



Good morning, Chairman Kreun and members of the committee, thank you for taking my testimony into consideration today.

My name is Troy Coons and I am the Chairman of the Northwest Landowners Association. Northwest Landowners Association represents over 560 farmers, ranchers, and property owners in North Dakota. Northwest Landowners Association is a nonprofit organization, and I am not a paid lobbyist.

Our organization focused on energy development in the northwest area of North Dakota when it started, but we represent landowners from North Dakota and beyond. We have members from across the state. Although we are usually most engaged on issues at the intersection of energy development and property rights, we have many members who are affected by North Dakota's water laws.

Our organization also supports local government, but we understand that landowners around the state have expressed significant concerns about the transparency of local water boards, as well as issues related to legal procedures. This bill addresses those concerns in a comprehensive way, and we appreciate how much work must have gone into drafting this legislation.

Ensuring that landowners are notified of legal proceedings by government bodies that impact their land is critical to a landowners' ability to protect his property. We have actually worked on other legislation this session related to Public Service Commission siting proceedings, with the same goal of ensuring greater notice to landowners. Landowners should be engaged in the process and have rights to notice, information, and a say in what happens on their land. This is true whether it is the PSC or a local water board.

We support the changes offered in Senate Bill 2208 and urge a do pass.

Thank you for taking the time to consider our comments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Troy Coons', is located below the word 'Sincerely,'.

Troy Coons, Chairman
Northwest Landowners Association